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LECTURES ON SHAKESPEARE

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Princeton University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 424 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.1in. x 1.0in. W. H. Auden, poet and critic, will conduct a course on Shakespeare at the New School for Social Research beginning Wednesday. Mr. Auden has announced that in his course . . . he proposes to read all Shakespeares plays in chronological order. The New York Times reported this item on September 27, 1946, giving notice of a rare opportunity to hear one of the centurys great poets comment on one of the greatest poets of all time. Published here for the first time, these lectures now make Audens thoughts on Shakespeare available widely. Painstakingly reconstructed by Arthur Kirsch from the notes of students who attended, primarily Alan Ansen, who became Audens secretary and friend, the lectures afford remarkable insights into Shakespeares plays as well as the sonnets. A remarkable lecturer, Auden could inspire his listeners to great feats of recall and dictation. Consequently, the poets unique voice, often down to the precise details of his phrasing, speaks clearly and eloquently throughout this volume. In these lectures, we hear Auden alluding to authors from Homer, Dante, and St. Augustine to Kierkegaard, Ibsen, and T. S. Eliot, drawing upon the full range of European literature and opera, and referring to the days newspapers and magazines, movies and cartoons. The result is an extended instance of the live conversation that Auden believed criticism to be. Notably a conversation between Audens capacious thought and the work of Shakespeare, these lectures are also a prelude to many ideas developed in Audens later prose--a prose in which, one critic has remarked, all the artists of the past are alive and talking among themselves. Reflecting the twentieth-century poets lifelong engagement with the crowning masterpieces of English literature, these lectures add immeasurably to...



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